

NEWS FROM SCDCA

SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

Carri Grube Lybarker, Administrator



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Contact: Juliana Harris, (803) 734-4296

SCAM ALERT: Home Repair Scams in Wake of SC Flood

COLUMBIA, S.C. – The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) warns that when natural disasters bring destruction, con artists follow closely behind. Scammers prey on individuals who are emotionally vulnerable and overwhelmed. They lure consumers with deals to repair the damage that are often too good to be true. Consumers should follow these tips when seeking help with home repairs in the wake of the flood:

- **Beware of contractors who just show up at the door.** They'll offer you a great deal because they're "in the neighborhood" and have materials left over from a previous job. Reputable contractors don't work that way.
- **Get all promises in writing.** If it isn't written down, it doesn't count. Verbal promises are worthless because if there's a dispute, you have nothing to back up your claim.
- **Do not be pressured into buying.** Good businesses don't need to rush you into a decision. The high-pressure buy now approach is designed to keep you from comparison shopping. Don't fall for it and get at least two bids for the work.
- **Require a contractor's license and proper identification.** Make sure they have the appropriate licenses from the state and county/city. Check their id and get the car/ truck license tag number.
- **Never pay in full up front.** Make sure the contract has a payment schedule. Don't let payments get ahead of the work.

About SCDCA

The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs aims to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, complaint mediation, enforcement and education. To file a complaint or get information on consumer issues, visit www.consumer.sc.gov or call toll-free, 1-800-922-1594.

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